

Advertising

Advertising is such a normal part of modern life that we do not think about it. However, advertising has a number of positive and negative impacts on society. On one hand, advertising drives the economy and offers us more choice; on the other hand, it manipulates us into buying things that we don't need.

Positives of Advertising

Advertising is a key part of modern business.

It creates demand for products.

Companies need to tell customers about their products.

Advertisements inform us about the choices we have.

Without advertising there would be higher unemployment.

Advertising can be regulated.

Products that can be a risk to health should display warnings.

In some countries it is illegal to advertise cigarettes on television.

Summary

Advertising is a key part of modern business. Companies need to tell customers about their products, and this wouldn't be possible without adverts. This is beneficial for everyone because it informs us about the choices that we have. Furthermore, by creating demand for products, advertising helps to increase the size of the economy and create jobs.

It is important to note that advertising can be regulated. Therefore, advertising that is a risk to public health can be banned. For example, in some countries it is illegal to advertise cigarettes on television. This shows that the government can control advertising and stop it from being dangerous.

Negatives of Advertising

Advertising manipulates people.

It aims to persuade people that buying a product will make them happier.

Advertisers focus on selling a brand image.

They use glamorous, successful people.

Advertisers often aim their marketing at children.

Children can easily be influenced by advertisers.

Children put pressure on their parents to buy them things.

Summary

It can be argued that advertising causes a lot of damage. First of all, advertising manipulates people. Most advertising does not focus on selling the practical function of an item, but on selling a brand image. Advertising aims to persuade people that buying a product will make them happier. For example, many adverts show glamorous, successful people using a product, and the message is that the viewer could be like them if they bought the product.

Secondly, advertisers often aim their marketing at children. This is unethical because children can be easily influenced by advertisers. They do not have the mental capabilities to understand that adverts are not a true depiction of real life. After watching an advert, children often put pressure on their parents to buy the product, and this can cause conflict between the parent and the child.

Practice Question

Some people say that advertising encourages us to buy things we don't really need. Others say that advertisements tell us about new products that may improve our lives. Which viewpoint do you agree with?

Give reasons for your answer and include any relevant examples from your own knowledge or experience.